

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 OMB-01 /128 W

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R 171013Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0050

INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

CINCPAC

UNCLAS SAIGON 21062

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EFIN, VS

SUBJ: CY 1974 BUDGET BILL BASES UPPER HOUSE AND GOES TO PRESIDENT

REF: SAIGON 20417

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. THE UPPER HOUSE DECEMBER 14 COMPLETED CONSIDERATION OF THE CY 1974 NATIONAL BUDGET AFTER FOUR DAYS OF PLENARY DEBATE. BY A FINAL VOTE OF 35 AGAINST 4, THE IDENTICAL BILL THAT HAD PASSED THE LOWER HOUSE NOVEMBER 30 WAS APPROVED AND SENT TO PRESIDENT THIEU FOR SIGNATURE. (SEE REFTEL FOR AN ANALYSIS OF THE BILL.) THE PRESIDENT IS EXPECTED TO SIGN RATHER THAN PROPOSE AMENDMENTS.

2. THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL WITHOUT CHANGE REFLECTS THE HIGH DEGREE OF CONSULTATION NOW EXISTING BETWEEN THE PRO-ADMINISTRATION MAJORITIES IN THE TWO HOUSES, OPERATING THROUGH THE DEMOCRACY PARTY'S LEGISLATIVE CHAPTER. THIS IS A RADICAL STREAMLINING OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS, WHICH WAS FREQUENCY PROLONGED IN PAST YEARS

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BY SECOND-ROUND CONSIDERATION OF BILLS IN THE LOWER HOUSE, DUE

TO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO CHAMBERS, AND BY CONSIDERATION OF PRESIDENTIAL AMENDMENTS. SOME INDEPENDENT SENATORS DURING THIS DEBATE CRITICIZED WHAT ONE OF THEM TERMED THE "SUPERSONIC SPEED" OF THE MAJORITY'S ACTION.

3. AS IN THE EARLIER LOWER HOUSE DISCUSSION, SEVERAL PRO-ADMINISTRATION SENATORS SHARPLY CRITICIZED EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGENCIES DURING THE BUDGET DEBATE. MOST NOTABLE WAS SENATOR HOANG XUAN HAO, CHAIRMAN OF THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, WHO ASKED THE INFORMATION COMMISSION AND THE EDUCATION MINISTRY TO RE-EXAMINE THE WHOLE SYSTEM OF CENSORING PUBLICATIONS, SAYING THAT WRITERS AND PUBLISHERS WERE MEETING DIFFICULTIES UNDER THE PRESENT PROCEDURES. HAO ALSO DIRECTED CRITICISMS AT THE INSPECTORATE AND THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING THE SUPREME COURT. GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS WERE SO NUMEROUS THAT AT ONE POINT UPPER HOUSE CHAIRMAN TRAN VAN LAM PROPOSED A SEPARATE PLENARY SESSION TO BE CONVENED SOON TO DRAW UP "RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE."
BENNETT

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